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# Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin

Free to All Visitors to the Museum or by Mail to Any Address

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## Guidance in the Galleries.

*The Office of Docent.*

ORAL instruction upon the collections has not hitherto been officially recognized among the duties owed by museums of art to the general public. Labels and catalogues are prepared for visitors generally, but the spoken word has been reserved for students specially enrolled.

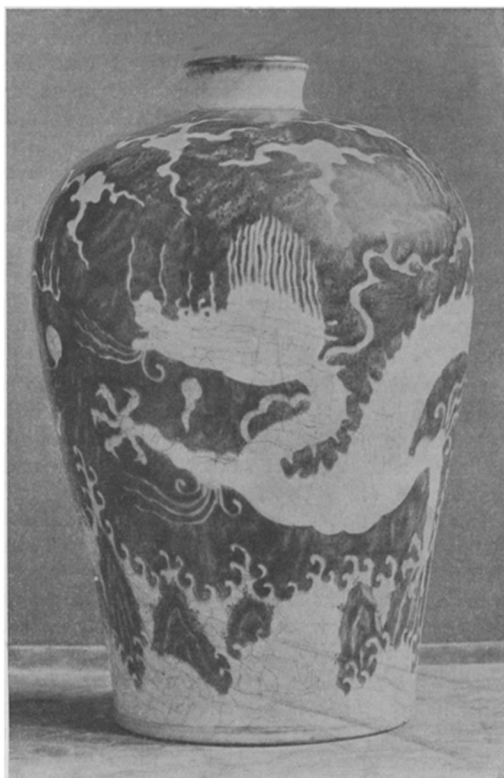
The complete fulfillment of the educational obligations of public collections of fine art demands a wide use of both methods. Guidance is exempt from some of the limitations of instruction given in print. A notice or a book cannot answer questions, and the reading of it takes time and effort which might be given to looking at the objects shown. The increase of oral instruction to classes in museums of art, both at home and abroad, within recent years, testifies to a widespread interest in opportunities of this kind. An important section of the proceedings of the conference of European museum officials at Mannheim in 1903 is devoted to reports from the classes held in German museums during previous years.

There remains only to widen the scope of such advantages by offering them under freer conditions. As a step toward this end, the guidance of visitors in the galleries has been made the special duty of one of the Museum staff, under the title of Docent. The Docent will give any visitor what information he possesses about any or all of the collections. Visitors having special interests will be aided in pursuing them; those desiring to see the whole Museum at one visit will be guided to the principal objects without loss of time; for those interested in the newest accessions the Docent may have data not yet published.

Appointments with the Docent may be made by letter to the Temporary Director of the Museum, or by application at the entrance to the Museum for any hour not previously engaged, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and on Saturday mornings. The number of persons forming a single party will be limited to ten. The time during which the services of the Docent may be retained will be limited to one hour, unless no other person is waiting. The Docent will be Mr. Garrick M. Borden (B. S. Cornell University in 1901; M. A., 1902), at present Assistant to the Secretary of the Museum. Mr. Borden was for three years lecturer on the history of Art in the Department

of University Extension of the University of California.

The undertaking is a first essay in a new direction, and its development will be guided by results. The public is cordially invited to coöperate in the experiment.



*Ming Jar (Height 15 in.)*

Ross Collection

## The Ross Gift of Chinese Porcelains.

THE collection of porcelains in the Museum has recently been increased by an important gift from Dr. Denman W. Ross, part of which has been placed on exhibition in Case 44 of the Pottery and Porcelain Room, with a few pieces in Cases 27 and 29. The Ross and other collections, and the pieces now on loan in the Museum, offer rich material for the study of Chinese ceramic art.

It is generally conceded that porcelain was first